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# PRESS RELEASE

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## **EAST COUNTY AGENTS ARREST MORE THAN 30 PEOPLE ON CHARTER BUSES AND MARIJUANA TRAFFICERS TAKE HIT FROM EAST COUNTY AGENTS**

**Pine Valley, CA:** Yesterday evening, five charter buses were returning from an Amway convention in Phoenix, AZ and approached the Interstate 8, Border Patrol Checkpoint. The agent conducting primary inspection directed the buses into secondary in order to allow additional agents to perform an immigration inspection of the passengers. In the course of the inspection, agents arrested 35 individuals who were illegally in the United States. The people arrested were determined to be part of the group returning from the convention and not bus stowaways. Two of these individuals requested an immigration hearing and the other thirty-three requested and were granted a voluntary return to Mexico.

Additionally, agents working in the Campo area seized approximately 1100 pounds of marijuana accounting for 63 percent of the total marijuana seizures in San Diego Sector during the month of June.

One of the seizures, consisting of 136 pounds of marijuana and valued at \$109,506.00, resulted in the arrest of two East County residents. While conducting traffic observation on Old Highway 80, agents observed a blue Ford van pass their position. Agents noticed that the driver became nervous after passing the Border Patrol vehicle and that a plastic object obstructing its view covered the license plate. The van continued to a market in Pine Valley, CA and parked. While the two women were in the market, the agents observed large duffel bags in the back seat. When the women returned to their vehicle the agents questioned them regarding their immigration status, at which time the women stated that they were United States Citizens. The agents then questioned the women concerning the bags in their vehicle, which were in plain view. The agents obtained consent to search the vehicle. Upon opening the door of the van, a strong odor, which is consistent with marijuana, was apparent. Agents then looked in the duffel bags discovering the marijuana. The women, one residing in Jamul, CA and the other in Jacumba, CA, were arrested and turned over to the DEA as were the narcotics and the vehicle.